



On the Occasion of the G7 Summit

An Open Letter to the Leaders of the G7, G20 and BRICS

On finalizing the Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing annex of the WHO Pandemic Agreement

Dear Leaders of the G7, the G20, BRICS and of all nations,

We write to you together, from Geneva and from Brasília, with one shared conviction: that the world must finish what it started, and that you can help it do so.

We begin not with an institution or an annex, but with a memory the whole world shares. Not so long ago, our hospitals overflowed. Families said goodbye to the people they loved through glass, or by telephone, or not at all. Children lost grandparents. Doctors and nurses, exhausted beyond anything we had a right to ask of them, kept going anyway. Estimates from WHO and others put the lives lost at up to twenty million. Humanity promised itself, in the rawness of that grief, that it would not face such a day again unprepared.

A little over a year ago, the world kept the first part of that promise. After the deadliest pandemic in a century, the nations of the world chose cooperation over division and adopted the WHO Pandemic Agreement to strengthen how countries can work together to prevent, prepare for, and respond to pandemics. In a divided world, that outcome was not to be taken for granted. It was an act of hope, and an act of faith in one another. We write to you now because that hope is not yet fulfilled, and because it lies within your hands to help fulfil it.

One piece remains. To respond to future pandemics in time, countries must be able to quickly identify pathogens with pandemic potential and share their genetic information and material so scientists can develop tools: the tests, the treatments, the vaccines that decide who lives and who does not. The system that makes this possible, fairly and on equal footing, is the Pathogen Access and Benefit-Sharing annex. It is the last piece of the puzzle, not only for the Pandemic Agreement but for everything WHO and Member States have built from the hard lessons of COVID-19. Until it is finished, the Agreement cannot enter into force. The promise stays unkept.

We will not pretend the road has been easy. When Member States closed their most recent session on the first of May, they had made real progress, but agreed that more time was needed. The hardest questions, including how the benefits of shared pathogens are defined and shared, how the system is governed, and how equity is guaranteed on equal footing, are

difficult for a reason. They are the very questions that went unanswered last time, while people who could have been protected were not. The world is wrestling with them now precisely because they matter so much.

Negotiators will meet again from 6 to 17 July. We believe in them, and we have seen their dedication up close. But we also know there are moments when good people, doing their best around a negotiating table, need their leaders to lift their eyes to the horizon. This is one of those moments, and it is yours.

So we come to you, plainly, with three requests.

First, **political will at the highest level.** The remaining issues will not be solved by technical effort alone. They need the clear signal that only a head of government can give: that finishing this annex is a national priority, and that your negotiators may reach for consensus with courage rather than caution. Solidarity is our best immunity, but solidarity has to be chosen, and it has to be chosen at the top. We know, too, that you may be asked if the Pandemic Agreement compromises state sovereignty. It does not, and the PABS annex, as an integral part of it, will not either. Article 22, paragraph 2 says so plainly: nothing in the Agreement gives WHO any authority to direct or alter a country's laws or policies, or to require measures such as lockdowns, travel restrictions or vaccination mandates. Those decisions remain with sovereign states. So we ask you, concretely, to instruct your negotiators to come to the July session ready to conclude, and to give them the flexibility to close the remaining gaps and finalize the annex in this round.

Second, **a spirit of equity.** The PABS system rests on a simple, fair bargain: those who share dangerous pathogens quickly must be able to trust that the vaccines and treatments born from that sharing will reach their own people too. Every one of us has a stake on both sides of it. When Brazil held the G20 presidency in 2024, it led the G20 to recognize, for the first time, inequality as a driver of pandemics. This is not charity, and it is not only conscience. It is also strategy: PABS exists to stop an outbreak at its source, and containing a threat where it begins is far cheaper, in lives and in resources, than fighting a pandemic once it has spread to every continent. A virus left to burn anywhere will, in time, find everyone. There is a further reason equity matters, one that governments and industries everywhere will grasp at once: predictability. Today the rules for accessing a pathogen and sharing what flows from it are improvised case by case, often mid-crisis. PABS replaces that with a single framework known in advance, stable rules that let laboratories and partners across the world move at the speed an outbreak demands. Legal certainty does not compete with equity; it makes equity work. We ask you to ensure the annex carries equity in its operational detail, not only in its preamble, so that access and benefit-sharing are guaranteed in practice.

Third, **a sense of urgency.** The next pandemic will not wait for us. Scientists estimate there is close to a one in four chance of another pandemic within the coming decade, and the ground beneath our old assumptions is shifting. Climate change, changing land use and evolving agriculture are redrawing the map of where dangerous pathogens emerge; the comfortable belief that outbreaks begin only in distant places is no longer true, and future hotspots may arise in or near your own countries. At the same time, advances in biotechnology, matched unevenly by biosafety, raise the risk of accidental or deliberate release. None of these dangers

respect a border. So we ask you to treat 17 July as a deadline, not a milestone, and to say so publicly, sending your negotiators, and the world, the unambiguous signal that this is the round in which the work is finished.

And we already know the price of being unready. The last pandemic took lives on a staggering scale, with estimates from WHO and others putting the toll at up to twenty million, and the International Monetary Fund estimates it cost the world economy over thirteen trillion dollars in lost output, a loss borne in every nation, in shuttered businesses, broken supply chains and a generation of disrupted schooling. Against that, the investment in a system that catches an outbreak early is small. As we write these words, an Ebola outbreak is being fought across two countries, with no approved vaccine and no cure, by responders who are risking their own lives to protect strangers. That is not a distant abstraction. It is happening now. Every month this annex stays unfinished is a month the world is less ready than it could be, and people are less safe than they deserve to be.

The nations of the world, together, have stood at every great turning point in the story of human health. Together we helped wipe smallpox from the earth. We pushed polio to the very edge of history. We turned back the tide of HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, and in doing so helped save more lives than any of us will ever be able to count. Finishing this Agreement is not a departure from that legacy. It is its natural next chapter, and it is within reach.

We made a promise to the millions we lost, and to the families who carry their absence still. Let us be the generation that keeps that promise. Finalizing this Agreement, through a shared commitment to one another, is our collective promise to protect humanity. Let us keep it, together, and in time.

With respect, and in the shared cause of protecting human life,



Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva
President
Federative Republic of Brazil



Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General
World Health Organization